

**TOPIC: RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN
NEUROSCIENCE AT UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
BOULDER**

**PREPARED BY: IAN MACGILLIVRAY, ASSISTANT DEPUTY DIRECTOR
FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

I. SUMMARY

This item recommends approval for University of Colorado Boulder (UCB) to offer a Bachelor of Arts in Neuroscience degree.

II. BACKGROUND

COMMISSION AUTHORITY

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education's role and responsibility in the review of new academic programs at institutions operating under a performance contract is defined in §23-5-129, C.R.S., which states that:

(6) While operating pursuant to a performance contract negotiated pursuant to this section, the governing board of a state institution of higher education...

(b) Need not consult with nor obtain approval from the Colorado commission on higher education to create, modify, or eliminate academic and vocational programs offered by the institution, so long as such creations, modifications, and eliminations are consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. Institutions shall submit information to the department demonstrating that the creation or modification of an academic or career and technical education program is consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. The Colorado commission on higher education shall have the authority to override the creation or modification of an academic or vocational program if the change made by the governing board is inconsistent with the institution's statutory role and mission.

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED PROGRAM

The following is summarized from UCB's proposal:

This degree will expand existing options for students interested in the biological/life sciences and allow them to acquire an in-depth understanding of the brain and its functions. This knowledge will prepare them for advanced degrees in the health, mental health, and basic research professions. This degree will also increase the ability of the Boulder campus to compete for top quality in-state students who might otherwise leave the state for their education. It will also enhance the University's ability to compete for high-quality nonresident students.

Neuroscience is the interdisciplinary scientific study of the nervous system. As such, the field spans an array of disciplines concerned with the structure, function, development, physiology, biochemistry, genetics, and pathology of the nervous system. Neuroscience is a branch of biological sciences. However, in its modern form it is now central to a number of other disciplines, including cognitive science, neuropsychology, neurology, psychiatry, clinical psychology, and behavioral neuroscience. This is because all behavior, mental activity, emotions, and moods are the product of the nervous system. Although relatively new, it is one of the most rapidly expanding areas of science. The importance of this discipline has prompted colleges and universities across the country to include neuroscience-related courses, majors, and minors in their curricula. Given the importance of understanding the contributions of the nervous system to many mental and physical health issues, the citizens of Colorado and the student body at the University of Colorado Boulder will be well served by the University of Colorado Boulder providing a B.A. in Neuroscience.

Additional information on this proposed degree, unrelated to fit with statutory role and mission, is attached (Attachment A).

ROLE AND MISSION SUPPORT

This degree supports UCB's statutory role and mission, which states in part:

...The Boulder campus of the university of Colorado shall offer a comprehensive array of undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degree programs... C.R.S. §23-20-101(1)(a)

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

Pursuant to 23-5-129(6)(b), Colorado Revised Statutes, department staff finds that UCB's proposed Bachelor of Arts in Neuroscience degree is consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. The degree meets the 120 credit cap and aligns with the gtPathways curriculum. The proposed degree was approved by CU Board of Regents at their September 17, 2013 meeting.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve University of Colorado Boulder's proposal to offer a Bachelor of Arts in Neuroscience degree.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Copies of all relevant materials are on file in the Academic Affairs Division and are available upon request.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

§23-5-129, C.R.S. Governing boards - performance contract - authorization - operations